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Trimester 2: Weeks 14-27 Providing the Best for Yourself and Your Baby

Scott Magnuson-Martinson

South Dakota State University

Kim Goodfellow

South Dakota State University

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Extension Extra

ExEx 14042

September 1997

Family and Consumer Sciences

Pregnancy

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES / SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY / USDA

TRIMESTER 2 WEEKS 14-27

Providing the Best for Yourself and Your Baby...

*by Scott Magnuson-Martinson, Ph.D., Extension Family Life Specialist, Texas Swanjord,
Ph.D., Extension Associate, Kim Goodfellow, Ed.S., Extension Associate,
Extension Family and Consumer Sciences.*

The second trimester is usually more calm than the first. Changes in the mother's body will begin to show. The expectant parents tell others their news, if they haven't before.

The Parents' Emotions

Women may worry about losing their waistlines, but men may find their mate's blossoming figure and different behavior an exciting change.

Begin an exercise program if you haven't already. Physical activity helps you stay emotionally well in addition to keeping your body in shape. Consult your health care provider about any new exercise program.

You will sometimes experience a let down feeling, even though you feel good about your pregnancy. Talk about how you feel, exercise, and enjoy yourself. If your low mood is constant, be sure to tell your health care provider.

Men may begin to have questions about being a father, but they may not know how to begin to ask. These questions may give you a place to start:

- What does a good father do when he's with his children?

- How do you feel about being a father?
- What changes occur in other couples' relationships when a baby enters the picture?
- What is the interrelationship between "quantity" and "quality" time happen?
- What are differences men and women have about bringing up kids?
- Why do babies do what they do?

Both men and women during pregnancy feel the need to be told they are loved. Both men and women need to be comforted, talked to, and listened to during the good times and the bad. Taking care of each other is good for the two of you and provides a beneficial climate for the fetus growing in the mother's body.

Join a parenting or prenatal group. You will enjoy learning and meeting new people as you prepare for the birth event.

The Mother's Body

In the second trimester the expectant mother usually has more energy. Once her waist has begun to increase she will find maternity clothes more comfortable.

Physical Changes

What You Can Do

Breasts enlarge

Good bra support will keep tissues from sagging.

Dizziness

Balance feels different

Moving your extremities increases blood flow. Rise slowly. Strengthening exercises will help, there are specific aerobic classes for pregnant women.

Swelling of feet and legs

Elevate feet several times a day, drinking more fluids, and avoiding tight clothing helps.

Constipation

Decide on a regular time to have a bowel movement each day; eat a high-fiber of whole grains, fruits and vegetables; drink lots of water (6-8 cups). Exercise is another help.

Leg cramps

Stretching calf muscles, elevating legs from time to time, and soaking legs in warm water can relieve this problem. Checking nutrition is important, too. Baby's bone growth depletes your calcium, causing cramps.

Start exercises for strengthening the pelvic muscles to prepare the mother's body for the baby's birth. These muscles will grow stronger if you use this suggested exercise: tighten the muscles you use to control the flow of urine, hold them tight for a few seconds, release slowly, and repeat the exercise four or five times daily.

The Developing Baby-To-Be

The fetus grows in the second trimester from about 2 1/2 inches in length to over a foot. Other changes:

- Rapid brain development.
- Hair growing on head.

- Fingers and toes are flexing.
- Fetus "practices" sucking, swallowing, stretching.

About week 20, both Mom and Dad will be thrilled when the baby's movement begins to be felt.

For more information . . .

ExEx 14041 for the first trimester and ExEx 14043 for the third trimester are available. Call the Extension office in your area of South Dakota for a free copy.

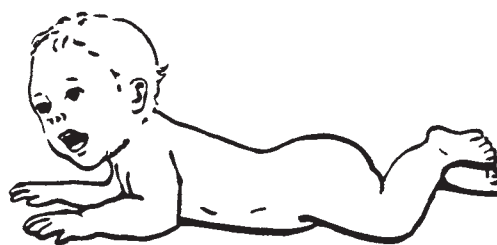
Suggested reading:

From the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation...

- Give Your Baby a Healthy Start: Stop Smoking
- Be Good to Your Baby Before It is Born
- Dad, it's your baby, too
- Men Have Babies, Too

For those with internet access...

- <http://www.childbirth.org> offers info on issues like "Pregnancy & HIV" and "Complications"
- <http://www.parenting-qa.com/> is "solely devoted to providing parents with answers to their most pressing questions."
- <http://www.parenthoodweb.com> pediatricians and psychiatrists respond to your e-mail
- <http://zerotothree.org> a treasure of information and research on infant and toddler development is provided by a child-advocacy group.



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